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SONGS FOR CHURCH AND HOME.

No. 1.—**SUN OF MY SOUL**. (C to E). W. HENRY MAXFIELD, Mus. Bac.No. 2.—**O COME, YE WEARY HEARTED**. (D to G). CHARLES DARTON.No. 3.—**GLORY TO THEE, MY GOD, THIS NIGHT**. (C to E-flat.) JAMES LYON.

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THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL :

A MONTHLY RECORD AND REVIEW

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Our Competitions.

We received some very practical papers on "How to Make the Choir Practice Interesting." After carefully going through them all we have decided to award the prize to

MR. A. BENDEL INGHAM, A.R.C.O.,
1, Birch Lane,
Manchester.

Mr. Ingham is Organist and Choirmaster at Rusholme Road Congregational Church, Manchester. The next paper in order of merit is from a Canadian competitor and signed "Montreal."

Our Next Competition.

WE offer a prize of Two Guineas for the best Harvest Anthem. Preference will be given to those that are suitable for general use as well as for Harvest Thanksgiving Services. The following are the conditions :—

1. Compositions must be sent to our office not later than May 1st.
2. Each composition must be marked with a *nom de plume*, and must be accompanied by a sealed envelope, containing the name and address of the composer.
3. The piece must not cover less than five, and

not more than six pages, of our "Popular Anthem" Series.

4. The successful composition shall become our copyright on payment of the prize.

5. Unsuccessful compositions will be returned if stamped addressed envelopes are sent us for that purpose.

6. We reserve the right to withhold the prize should we consider there is no composition of sufficient merit or suitability.

7. Our decision in all matters relating to the competition shall be final.

Three "Songs for Church and Home" are now ready, and may be had at our office. The aim has been to provide songs suitable to be sung during service, and we venture to think the composers have succeeded in their object. There is nothing "trashy" about the music; it is musicianly and well adapted to the words. Each song is published at the low price of one shilling nett. We can cordially recommend these compositions to all solo singers. Further particulars will be found in our advertisement columns.

Mr. H. Ford-Benson asks us to state that his tune, which was recently accepted by the Nonconformist Choir Union, does not appear in the Festival Book this year, because the Committee, wishing to make the selection of music suitable to the Diamond Jubilee, determined to commence the programme with "God save the Queen," instead of with a hymn-tune as in former years.

We have received a copy of the Festival Hymns and Tunes for the year, published by the Manchester Sunday School Union. The selection is upon the whole an admirable one. We are informed that 180,000 copies were sold of last year's collection. We have no doubt this year the sale will be more, as one of the hymns has been written specially in commemoration of the sixtieth year of the reign of the Queen.

We frequently receive letters deploring the fact that at the churches our correspondents attend the musical service is not as bright and varied in character as it should be. Some complain of the very small use made of music in the service; others say it is inartistic and vulgar, and consequently hinders rather than helps devotional feeling. We should like to know the cause of Nonconformist Church music not being equal to the needs of present day requirements. What is the obstacle? Is it the minister or deacons or congregation who are opposed to a good musical service? Is it because the choir is inefficient or the organist incapable? There must be some cause in every church where there is a poor service. Will our friends help us to get at a solution of this matter? We shall be glad if those of our readers who experience this state of things will send us a post-card stating briefly the obstacle to a good musical

service. Whether we shall make public use of this information we cannot yet say. But if we do, our correspondents may rely upon us not revealing names and places, so their identity will not be recognised. They may therefore write with perfect freedom. Postcards should be marked "Obstacle," and should reach us before the 14th inst.

We are glad to note that the Rev. Eynon Davies, referring to the recent Welsh Festival at St. Paul's Cathedral, urges the Welsh Nonconformists in London to hold a festival in the Metropolitan Tabernacle. We made exactly the same suggestion a year ago in these columns, feeling sure that such a service would be far more in conformity with the true feelings of London Welshmen than Sir John Puleston and the Welsh clergy's attempt to bolster up the establishment in Wales. We hope all London Welsh Nonconformists will at once adopt Mr. Davies' idea.

There is a choir strike at Cranswick (Yorkshire) Primitive Methodist Chapel. The organist requested the trustees to provide a new instrument, but they suggested an expert should be called in to report upon the present organ. This was done, and the verdict was against the instrument. The trustees, however, could not see their way to purchase a new organ, and the organist therefore declined to play any longer without a salary. Consequently another player was appointed in his place. Thereupon the choir took their seats amongst the congregation.

Passing Notes.

Is there such a thing as comic music? I am led to ask after reading through the leading criticisms of Sir A. C. Mackenzie's so-called comic opera. There seems to be a pretty unanimous opinion that Sir Alexander, like the typical Scotsman of Sydney Smith, "jokes with difficulty"; that, in fact, his musical humour does not lie in the music at all, but in the way he uses certain of the orchestral instruments. But is not this, after all, about the only way in which you can make people laugh by means of music? Of course we will allow that when words are present it may be easy enough to create a laugh. But take music as an abstract thing, and tell me whether there is any method of rendering it laughable apart from the manner in which it may be performed. Look at Gounod's *Funeral March of a Marionette*. It is a graceful, melodious piece of music, comic only in the title. If you had no title and no description of the incidents which the composition is supposed to illustrate, you would as little think of laughing at it as of laughing at the *Dies Irae*. Bach, again, wrote a couple of so-called comic cantatas, but the music is as little comic as the Well-tempered Clavier: the humour is entirely in the words. Even in such things as Mozart's *Musical Joke* and Romberg's *Toy Symphony*, there is at bottom no real fun. The fun of the latter consists only in giving good music to bad instruments; and as for the former, it is simply on a par with that saddening type of American humour which

supposed to lie in eccentricity of spelling. In other words, the joke consists merely in the instruments coming in at wrong places, executing inappropriate phrases, and playing out of tune—neither of which is any joke at all, otherwise we should find a joke (and some people do, to be sure) in every village orchestra. There is usually a laugh at the bassoon which accompanies the entry of the clowns in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*. But it is really the instrument that creates the laugh, not the music. Give the music to an instrument which is not grotesque in itself and take the clowns out of sight, and you will no more laugh at the music than you would laugh at a tax collector. No, I can see humour in a poem or in a picture, but I cannot see humour in music as music. Nor did I ever see the elements of humour of any kind in Sir A. C. Mackenzie. And it is a pity, since he desires so much to make a little money!

On my library shelves, keeping close company with Sir John Stainer's "Music of the Bible," there has stood for many years an interesting little volume by the Rev. Francis Jacox, bearing the title of "Bible Music." It is a book from the frequent consultation of which, I have derived a great deal both of pleasure and instruction. Mr. Jacox takes a musical text from the Bible as a heading for his various discourses; but the commendable point about him is that he uses his texts less as standing points than as starting-points—less as something to make a stand upon, than as something to get away from. Thus, in dealing with Saul's malady and David's minstrelsy, we have a very full treatment of the subject of music as a medicine, with illustration from literature and history heaped in almost prodigal affluence upon the sacred text. I have often wondered whether Mr. Jacox ever preached these discourses, and if so, what his hearers thought. Certainly they would not go to sleep. But why do I speak of Mr. Jacox today? For this reason, that Mr. Jacox is just dead, and I did not know, until I met with a stray paragraph in some newspaper, what an eccentric character this author of one of my literary possessions must have been in the flesh. Mr. Jacox, who was in his seventy-first year, had been, it seems, an invalid for several years, and had contributed upwards of £6,000 to the Printers' Pension Corporation, besides founding eight pensions with his benefactions. It further appears that although for eight years he had constantly contributed to the funds of the Printers' Corporation, he had declined a personal interview with any officer of the Society, and had never been seen by any one connected with it. On one occasion when a telegram was sent to him, he wrote back—all his letters, by the way, were written upon small scraps of paper—advising the officers not to waste the funds of the institution on telegrams! A man with a spice of originality, evidently.

I had often observed the frequency with which Mr. Jacox quoted the musical references of De Quincey, but it was not until reading recently Dr. Japp's life of the little Opium Eater that I found an evident reason for the predilection. Mr. Jacox as a young man was on visiting terms with De Quincey; and, being musical,



musical too. He tells us that the latter spoke of music as one of the necessities of his daily life. He was not often in the room when his daughters sang or played, but he was a good listener in his "den" downstairs, and would comment upon his favourites among their pieces when he joined them in the evening. His reverence for Beethoven was devout; Mendelssohn he never came really to admire, which disappointed Mr. Jacox as much as it would have grieved Mr. F. G. Edwards. The music to *Antigone* was his pet aversion. Bellini was a great favourite with him, and he never tired of gems from *Don Giovanni*. Handel he had early learned to love through hearing his oratorio choruses so much in Lancashire; and to the last there was nothing he liked better to hear than "O lovely peace," sung by his daughters. In a recent number of *Macmillan* I showed up some of De Quincey's little mistakes in the matter of music, but I have since almost repented of the ungrateful exposure. None of our great authors had a more genuine appreciation of the art than the Opium Eater, and, after all, his errors are trifling compared with the screaming absurdities of some later writers. De Quincey would never have set a man to sing a song and accompany himself on the bagpipe, nor would he have placed a girl at the piano, as Mr. Black does, to play a Mozart sonata in A sharp major.

Has anything ever been said in these columns about the authoress of "Nearer, my God, to Thee"? The question is suggested by the following entry in Messrs. Novello's last list of new publications:

FLOWER, ELIZA.—Musical illustrations of "The Waverley Novels." Dedicated to Sir Walter Scott, Bart. Newly engraved edition.

I should think I am not far wrong in saying that nine out of every ten people, even musical people, who might chance to see this announcement would pass it by as having no interest whatever for them. And I am not prepared to say that anybody is interested in Miss Eliza Flower's musical illustrations of the Waverley novels, although the astute heads at Berners Street are hardly likely to publish anything by a deceased composer in which they do not see their account. But Eliza Flower herself should still have some interest for musicians, especially for church musicians. She was a sister of the lady who gave us "Nearer, my God, to Thee," and she is herself remembered for the pleasing little air to "Now pray we for our country," which might well be afforded a new lease of life in these coming commemoration days. More than that, she was intimately connected with Browning, and, according to Mr. Moncure D. Conway, some passages in "Pauline" were inspired by her. The Flower sisters (Sarah and Eliza) were Browning's seniors, and they cherished him alike as poet and friend. Sarah did not like his "ugly nose," and Eliza did not like some of his verse, especially the idea in Pippa's song, "God's puppets first and last are we." Mr. Conway says that in conversations with Browning he could see that Eliza Flower stood sacredly apart in the poet's memory and homage. "She was," he said, "a composer of real genius." She died of consumption in 1847, and he could never speak of her early decease without pain.

The year before he had written to her: "I never had another feeling than entire admiration for your music—entire admiration. I put it apart from all the other English music I know, and fully believe in it as the music we all waited for." This might have been taken as a poet's licence if Mendelssohn had not also made the acquaintance of the Flowers, and declared—so it is said—in favour of Eliza's musical genius. John Stuart Mill was supposed to be at one time an aspirant for Eliza's hand, but—well, we know that "fatal phenomenon" was unsuccessful there.

There is some evidence to show that Browning had indirectly a good deal to do with the inception of "Nearer, my God, to Thee." Indeed it has been positively stated that the hymn was written in a mood of great mental anguish caused by the authoress' crumbling faith in the inerrancy of the Scriptures, which, again, was produced by Browning's "Pauline." Sarah Flower was shocked at the views expressed about the Bible, and determined to answer, but it was, she says, "in answering Robert Browning that my mind refused to bring forward argument, turned recreant, and sided with the enemy." At this time the Flowers were orphans under the guardianship of Mr. W. J. Fox, one of the ministers of the South Place Ethical Society in London, which, by the way, celebrated its centenary some four years ago. The two sisters, with voices "mated like their souls," sang in the Society's choir; and Sarah, disappointed in her desire to become an actress, turned hymn-writer for the little congregation. Mr. Fox, also, whose early lyrical power had been repressed by a life of storm and stress, again rose into song; and when his collection of hymns and anthems was published in 1841 it was under the musical editorship of Eliza Flower, who herself furnished a good deal of the music. It was here that "Nearer, my God, to Thee" appeared for the first time. An interesting chapter this, in the history of church music and song. Some day I must exploit it more fully.

J. CUTHBERT HADDEN.

IPSWICH NONCONFORMIST CHOIR UNION.

THIS flourishing Union gave an excellent performance of *Samson* recently, under the very efficient conductorship of Mr. J. Hayward. The solos were sustained by Miss Annie Swinfen, Miss A. L. Broome, Mr. A. C. Orriss, and Mr. Musgrove Tufnail, all of whom acquitted themselves to the satisfaction of the audience. The choruses went with much vigour and precision, and clearly showed how carefully the singers had been trained.

The accompaniments were played by the band of the Ipswich Philharmonic Society, a great improvement upon the "scratch" band which had to do duty in former years. The proceeds of the Concert were given to Hope Home Orphanage.

A few days after the Concert, the Annual Meeting and Social Gathering took place. Miss Annie Wilson and Mr. Musgrove Tufnail were the stars of the evening. During the proceedings a presentation was made to the local amateur tenor, Mr. A. C. Orriss, who has in all the oratorio performances rendered excellent service in the tenor solos. Mr. Hayward, on behalf of the subscribers, made the presentation, which Mr. Orriss suitably acknowledged.



Music at the Thomas Coats' Memorial Church, Paisley.

"Do thy little, do it well," runs the old adage. We imagine some such idea as this must have taken well hold of the mind of one James Coats, who in the early years of this century commenced in a very "little" way to make sewing cotton, first employing only about a score of workers. Since that time the sons, grandsons, and the Limited Liability Company which they latterly formed, have made the Ferguslie Thread Works one of the most notable enterprises in the world, and these comprehensive works form, in their magnificence, an apt illustration of the potentialities of "small beginnings." Each day there is as much thread finished as would wind round the world several times; and in order to produce spools for the thread, it is calculated that an extent of forest planted with birch trees covering 500 acres has to be cut down every year, while, on an average, twelve large ships are employed each season in bringing the wood from America and Canada.

In 1883 Thomas Coats (son of the aforesaid James Coats) passed away, after living a most exemplary life in Paisley for seventy-four years. As a memorial to such an estimable father, his family have built a church, which assuredly will carry his good name far down the ages. This church is of such unique magnificence that it is freely admitted on all hands to be one of the finest Nonconformist sanctuaries in Europe. The building was commenced in 1886, and was opened for worship on the 13th May, 1894, under the pastorate of Dr. Oliver Flett, who died suddenly at

Arran on 17th August following. The church has been without a pastor since the death of Dr. Flett, hence it has not yet been formally "handed over" by the Coats family, who evidently must contribute very munificently to the expenses of its maintenance.

The church is connected with the Baptist denomination, to which Mr. Coats belonged, and everything that artistic skill could supply has been elaborated externally and internally to make it a fitting memorial of a worthy personality and an honoured name. The design was furnished by Mr. Hippolyte J. Blanc, R.S.A., Edinburgh, architect of many notable modern churches, and the structure cost a sum variously stated as between one hundred and twenty and one hundred and fifty thousand pounds. It is said to be the finest example of medieval ecclesiastical Gothic architecture which has been erected in this country since the Reformation. Built on the cathedral plan, it has nave and aisles, transepts and choir, and is surmounted by a massive square tower, rising from the intersection of nave, transepts, and choir, which is crowned by an open lantern and spire, rising 220 feet from the street level.

The church, though very large, is seated for only 900 worshippers. In all its fittings, accessories, elaborations, and decorations, the utmost refinement and finish are displayed throughout; in fact, it would be next to impossible to imagine anything more beautiful than this magnificent erection, both as a whole and in its details. The carvings in wood, stone, and marble are of the most exquisite description, and must be seen to be understood. The marble baptistery, the carved choir-stalls, with their richly designed brass book-rests, the lovely windows, the grand organ, the fine frescoed roof in the chancel, and the massive chandeliers, besides the elegant suites of rooms for candidates, pastors, choir, and people, are among the wonders of this ecclesiastical palace; the spacious halls, which can accommodate 900 people, adding to the sense of space which so impresses all those who behold it. At present there is only a temporary wooden pulpit, but we understand this is soon to be supplanted by a magnificent one of alabaster. The surrounding grounds are beautifully laid out, and afford every opportunity for studying the external aspect of the superb structure. Our picture gives some idea of the place, though when one has seen the building itself, any picture of it seems almost a libel. Especially is this so regarding the interior, so we prefer not to attempt to portray this; rather would we leave the reader to imagine the effect of extremely artistic form and colour which baffles adequate description and illustration.

A very conspicuous feature, which we ought not to omit mentioning, is the richly carved communion table, which stands at the approach to the chancel, and immediately in front of the baptistery. The front portion of this is embellished with a very elaborate device in gold and coloured silk, the main feature being the letters I.H.S., with kneeling figures on either side. This, together with the very richly embroidered table-cover, present a

most strikingly handsome appearance as one enters the church.

It is by no means easy to stop writing of the beauties of this noble sanctuary, but pressure of space compels us to keep entirely to musical lines in what is to follow. In the first place the organ shall be spoken of. This instrument, which ranks amongst the most important organs yet erected in Scotland, was built by Messrs. Hill and Son, at a cost of over three thousand pounds. It is divided into two portions, placed in recesses above the stalls, on either side of the fine and lofty chancel—the south chamber containing the great, solo and choir, and that of the north the swell and pedal. The console stands at the end of the chancel, midway between the organs, the player

at the Glasgow University, and is very highly respected in Scotch musical circles. He is, however, of an exceedingly modest and retiring nature, and this prevents us from giving his portrait in our customary way, having respect to his express wish in this matter.

The choir is composed of about fifty members, made up as follows: sixteen boys, twenty ladies, and fourteen gentlemen, who all wear white surplices. Yes! this is quite true, ladies in white surplices in a Baptist Church in Scotland! and what's still more surprising, the ladies also wear mortarboards! So greatly impressed were we with this novel idea that we give a portrait of the leading soprano, Madame Shepherd, in her full choir vestments, so that our readers may thus see what a pitch things



facing the congregation, though hidden from view by a most elaborately carved oak screen. The mechanism throughout is tubular pneumatic.

All the arrangements of the console are for the comfort of the player, the stops being arranged in diagonal jambs, with ivory knobs. Below the clavier are the combination pistons. The majority of the interior pipes are of "spotted" metal, those in the cases being of bright tin. In the vault below the chancel are placed the blowing feeders, driven by four hydraulic engines, and supplying wind at various pressures to the different reservoirs placed in the organ above. The cases are of beautiful workmanship and of great richness, and were designed by the architect of the church. A full specification is given in another part of this issue.

The whole of the musical arrangements are in the hands of Mr. Montague Smith, who is organist and choirmaster. Mr. Smith is also the organist

have attained over the border, where it is generally supposed church music is so little thought of.

The appearance of these twenty fair lady choristers decorously filing into the stalls was distinctly imposing, and whatever may be said by some frightened and amazed chapel folk concerning such a very startling innovation, many feel that after all, such a costume is infinitely more becoming than the gaily coloured millinery which is frequently a conspicuous feature in the attire of the female portion of a mixed choir. We can well imagine a large amount of hot controversy at the ordinary church meeting were such a "Romish" or "High Church" idea proposed. Happily, however, the Paisley Church was spared such a wordy war, as the suggestion appears to have been carried out without the consent of the church being asked, the idea apparently being that had the proposition been to introduce an extravagant or vulgar dress, the church

might interfere; but as the costume is of the simplest and most modest character, the church had no sufficient cause to object; and so the choir was allowed free choice in the matter, and their decision was unanimous in favour of a uniform dress.

There are, we understand, twelve paid choristers amongst the members, Madame Shepherd being the leading soprano, as already mentioned. This lady has a good voice, and is well known in northern circles as a thoroughly competent singer of oratorio and ballads.

Hymn, chant, and anthem books have been compiled specially for the church by the musical director, Mr. Montague Smith, the anthem book containing a very fine collection of 179 choice selections of the highest order of church music. These books are freely distributed, both in Staff and Tonic-solfa notation, throughout all the pews, so that the worshippers are thus relieved of the expense of buying their own books. Were there ever more complete musical arrangements made in any of the Free Churches? Certainly not to our knowledge.

A prominent member of the choir, and one who takes very enthusiastic interest in its welfare, is Mr. George H. Coats, who, at the time of the removal from the old chapel in Storie Street, gave a lecture on "An Ideal Church." This has been printed, fortunately, and is full of broadminded ideas and beautifully expressed Christian sentiment regarding musical worship. We hope in an early number to give some interesting extracts from this lecture.

An opportunity was afforded us of attending the services at this noble fane on Sunday, February 14th, when, needless to say, we were intensely impressed with all we saw and heard.

One serious disappointment we regretfully had to encounter, and that was the enforced absence through illness of the musical chief. On this account the music was perhaps not so elaborate as it otherwise would have been. Mr. Smith's place at the organ was taken by his son, Mr. Montague Smith, junr., who appeared to be quite able to fill such an important post. The choir stalls were quite full. There are three rows on each side, which are raised above each other, so that all the choristers can be seen, and their voices have full scope. The services were ably conducted by the Rev. T. Plant, of Burnley, who chose this most appropriate text for his morning discourse, "Upon the top of the pillars was lily work" (1 Kings vii. 22). Around this passage was weaved much lofty thought concerning the building of "the Temple not made with hands," which seemed doubly impressive in the midst of the unique surroundings.

We particularly noticed the very reverent way the choir sang the Amen at the close of each prayer; it was very slowly rendered, and given with great devotional effect and feeling. Not always was the Amen sung at the end of the hymns, but only in those where it is thought to be appropriate.

A grand roll of praise was given forth by choir, congregation, and organ in the several well-known hymns and tunes which were sung. The tempo

was certainly much slower than we are accustomed to in these southern spheres, yet somehow under the circumstances it seemed most effective.

The morning anthem was "My God, look upon me" (J. Reynolds), a really beautiful anthem exquisitely rendered, the solo portions being taken by Mdme. Shepherd and Mrs. Robb. In the evening Barnby's "It is high time to awake" was also finely sung.

The Lord's Supper is observed at this church every Sunday at the close of the morning service. Another noticeable feature was the unusual length of time the congregation remained in their places after the benediction was pronounced—an utter absence of rush and hurrying off, as is often too prevalent.

Benches are provided throughout the church for kneeling, making it easy for the worshippers to assume a reverent attitude during prayer. This might well be followed in other of our churches, as it would no doubt tend to lessen that lax attitude during prayer time which is far too common amongst Nonconformists.

Mr. Smith gave us a chance of hearing the power of the grand organ at the close of the evening service, when in the Handel chorus "How excellent," from *Saul*, he flooded the church with an amount of tone which made one's musical soul leap high. Then we most reluctantly had to come away from this glorious building, feeling that it was indeed good to have been there, and to have received all the uplifting of one's highest thoughts which such imposing architecture inspires. It must surely be a poor soul who could enter such a church without deep feelings of gratitude that any man should have lived a life deserving such a memorial, and still poorer must be the mind of any man who cries out against such lavish expenditure connected with the worship of the Almighty; rather would we accept such with devout thankfulness, in the sure and certain hope that it will be the means of helping and guiding many a careworn creature.

We cannot close this notice without recognising in the most cordial manner the exceeding kindness of Mr. J. M. McCallum and his nephew, Mr. Neil McCallum (secretary of the church), who, together with Mr. G. H. Coats, welcomed us in a most delightful way, and afforded us hospitality such as to make our visit a never-to-be-forgotten sojourn in their midst. We wish ourselves many, many happy returns of that day.

Nonconformist Church Organs.

THE THOMAS COATS' MEMORIAL CHURCH,
PAISLEY.

Built by Messrs. Hill and Son.

Great Organ. CC to A.

				Feet.
1. Double Open Diapason...	Tin	16
2. Open Diapason	...	Metal	...	8
3. Open Diapason	...	"	...	8
4. Stopped Diapason	...	Wood	...	8
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6. Octave	Metal	4
7. Harmonic Flute	"	4
8. Twelfth	"	2
9. Fifteenth	"	2
10. Mixture, 4 ranks	"	—
11. Mixture, 3 ranks	"	—
12. Double Trumpet	"	16
13. Posaune	"	8
14. Clarion	"	4

(Nos. 11, 12, 13, 14, on heavier wind.)

Choir Organ. CC to A.

15. Lieblich Bourdon	Wood	16
16. Dulciana	Metal	8
17. Viola di Gamba	"	8
18. Gedeckt	Wood	8
19. Lieblich Flute	Metal	4
20. Piccolo	"	2
21. Cor Anglais (free reed)	"	8

Solo Organ. CC to A.

22. Harmonic Flute	Metal	8
(In A SWELL),		
23. Rohr Gedeckt	Wood & Metal	8
24. Flauto Traverso	Metal	4
25. Orchestral Oboe	"	8
26. Clarionet	"	8
27. Vox Humana	"	8
28. Tuba	"	8

(7 inch wind).

Swell Organ. CC to A.

29. Bourdon	Wood & Metal	16
30. Geigen Principal	Metal	8
31. Salcional	"	8
32. Voix Céleste	"	8
33. Rohr Flute	Wood & Metal	8
34. Lieblich Flute	Metal	4
35. Geigen Principal	"	4
36. Flageolet	"	2
37. Mixture, 3 ranks	"	—
38. Contra Oboe	"	16
39. Cornopean	"	8
40. Oboe	"	8
41. Clarion	"	4

Pedal Organ.

42. Sub Bass	Wood	32
43. Open Diapason	"	16
44. Violone	Tin	16
45. Bourdon	Wood	16
46. Violoncello	"	8
47. Octave	Metal	8
48. Ophecleide	"	16

Couplers, etc.

49. Swell to Great.	54. Solo Sub Octave.
50. Swell to Great Octave.	55. Great to Pedal.
51. Swell to Great Sub-Octave.	56. Swell to Pedal.
52. Swell to Choir.	57. Choir to Pedal.
53. Solo to Great.	58. Solo to Pedal.
	59. Tremulant to Solo.

60. Tremulant to Swell.

5 Pneumatic Combination Pedals to Great and Pedal.	
4 " " Pedals to Swell.	
5 " " Pistons to Great and Pedal.	
4 " " Pistons to Swell.	
3 " " Pistons to Choir.	
3 " " Pistons to Pedal.	
3 " " Pistons for Couplers, Nos.	

49, 55, and 56.

Two Balanced Swell Pedals.

How to Make the Choir Practice Interesting.

BY A. BENDEL INGHAM, A.R.C.O.,

Organist and Choirmaster at Rusholme Road Congregational Church, Manchester.

THE choir practice is of paramount importance to the efficiency of every choir. It is therefore absolutely necessary that it should be made as interesting and attractive as possible, to ensure regular and pleasurable attendance, as the most useful members have generally constant demands on their time and energies by lectures, clubs, concerts, debating societies, etc. It is, however, surprising (as a well-known conductor once remarked) how business and other engagements can be made to accommodate themselves to our requirements when enthusiasm in any pursuit is the motive power, and a member who thoroughly enjoys the weekly rehearsal, and feels a personal interest in its success, will make great sacrifices to attend.

It may safely be said that the main elements of success in keeping up the interest of a choir are a judicious selection of music and careful training. The choirmaster should be possessed of patience, tact, and judgment, and whilst being a strict disciplinarian, he must be agreeable and courteous. He should be a good all-round musician, and be able to impart knowledge in an easy and cheerful manner. He should be first at the practice, in order to welcome each member. An up-to-date man will draw up a programme of what has to be done, and hand the librarian a slip giving a list of the music in the order in which it will be practised, so that there may be no unnecessary delay between the pieces. The practice should be thorough, and general conversation between the various items discouraged. Attention will then be secured and the interest sustained.

It is a good plan, and puts the choir in form, to commence with a little scale practice, or other vocal exercises. All hymn tunes, chants, etc., to be given on the following Sunday, which are not thoroughly familiar, should then be carefully rehearsed, and marks of expression inserted (where necessary) by the individual members, it being, of course, a *sine qua non* that each has a set of service books for his or her exclusive use, with the singer's number on. Some modern hymn tunes require careful practice before even a well-trained choir can do them justice, and it lends variety in the rehearsal of such pieces if they are sung by the choir in sections, one verse trebles and altos, another tenors and basses, a third in unison with a varied accompaniment *ad lib.*, and a fourth sung as a quartett. This is an excellent method for encouraging young or nervous singers, and enables a choirmaster to obtain a knowledge of the powers of the various members.

Music of a more elaborate nature should next be taken up, *e.g.*, anthems, part songs, or a cantata, alternating, where possible, sacred with secular, and difficult with easy pieces. Music which is new to the choir must be continually introduced if the interest of the members is to be sustained, and music which is much beneath or far in advance of the capacity of the members should be avoided. It may here be remarked that when new music is under rehearsal, it is very help-

ful to the sopranos to have a half-hour's practice before the others arrive. Less accompaniment then is needed at the full practice, and the other parts get their notes better when the sopranos are fairly confident. It also saves the time and patience of the other voices, as it is irksome and monotonous for one part to be taken through a passage repeatedly in the presence of the other singers. Inexperienced members should have a place next to those more advanced, and the practice is thereby rendered additionally helpful.

Before singing a piece, the choir-master should refer to any peculiarity or special feature in the work, and give hints respecting accent, phrasing, rhythm, attack, etc. All wrong pronunciation and incorrect notes should be pointed out; catchy bars, awkward intervals, and chromatic passages should be taken over separately with the parts concerned, and the practice of *soft* singing with good round tone should not be overlooked.

No single movement should be considered satisfactory until it can be sung correctly *without accompaniment*. The choir-master should frequently retire a little distance to hear the effect. The choir will then do their best to merit a favourable criticism. To encourage friendly rivalry between the parts it is well occasionally to "pit" one section against another.

It is an excellent plan for members of a choir to contribute a trifling weekly sum towards new music. All persons take a greater interest in an institution which they support financially, and it is pleasant not to be a burden on deacons or trustees in such a matter. Moreover it is astonishing how much music may be purchased in the course of a year, if each member contributes a weekly sum of one penny only.

When the rehearsal is half way through, there should be an interval of about ten minutes for rest and conversation, and for any announcements. The secretary should then collect the weekly subscriptions (if any) and mark the attendances *in view of the choir*, who are thus reminded of the fact that they are missed when they are absent. The attendances at services and rehearsals should be read out each quarter. Whilst this excites the interest and probably the risibilities of the members, it undoubtedly acts as a deterrent in cases where individuals are disposed to be lax in their attendance.

It adds variety to a practice if a solo or duet is given during the interval.

Throughout the rehearsal the organ should be sparingly used. It is more sociable for rehearsals to be held in a room with a piano accompaniment. This should be done wherever possible when the bulk of the music to be rehearsed is secular. When a piano is used the practice will be brighter, and the members will gain in self-reliance.

The occasional preparation of concerts for charitable purposes will awaken interest at the choir practice, and at the same time be an agency for good.

The rehearsal (which ought not to exceed an hour and-a-half) should conclude by singing some favourite piece. This creates a pleasant impression, and the choir separate in an agreeable mood.

The choir-master should show how gratefully he

appreciates good, earnest work. He should be full of enthusiasm, and endeavour to inspire his choir with lofty motives, so that they may recognise the importance and responsibilities of their position, then their interest will not flag, but their work will be truly a labour of love.

Music in the Work of the Church.

BY REV. W. B. CHAMBERLAIN.

(Concluded from p. 47.)

ANOTHER error in this matter of choirs is the traditional but false assumption that singers are such a sensitive and senseless class of beings that it is practically impossible to do anything with them except to let them have their way or dismiss them. From twenty-five years of intimate association with this class of people I am prepared to refute this accusation as wholly unfounded and unfair. Like any other class of specialists, they do object to being dictated in the details of their work by those who are ignorant of those details; but almost more than any other class I have known, they welcome intelligent and sympathetic suggestions.

It is not, however, the choir-ministers any more than the pulpit-ministers that make the real worship of the church. These special servants of the congregation of course are primarily efficient in giving the key to the devotions, but the general sense of the people as a whole will always modify and often even neutralize or reverse the effect of both pulpit and choir, while the corroborative and culminative effect of the congregation's mood and response is, in worship as in oratory, the object and the end of the whole work.

THE CONGREGATION.

Intelligent taste and devotional sympathy must therefore be secured by the congregation. To this end the hymns and tunes assigned to the people will be most studiously regarded. The literary nature of hymns as lyrics, simple, reflective, or enthusiastic, or as more or less dramatic, will be noted by the minister, suggested to choir, and taught to congregation, in social meetings and song services. This may be done as legitimately as any notice may be taken of literary form or textual criticism of the Bible itself, and perhaps with as good results. For what is a Christian hymn but the embodiment of some biblical truth in poetic form, often not more poetic than the original, only different. Such biblical truth in form of a hymn often comes, or may come, closer to both feeling and understanding because it embodies the experience of some other man, contemporary or modern, and its grateful form and musical setting endear it to the heart and incorporate it with the life.

HYMNS AND TUNES.

For the cultivation of the devotional spirit, then, it is of utmost importance that both hymns and tunes be pure in form, refined in tone, elevated in spirit, earnest in purpose. We may justify, for their peculiar uses, the physically exciting and rationally trivial or absurd

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ditties and jingles which may be accompanied by clatter of tambourine and thudding of drum; we may allow the occasional and special usefulness of many of the so-called "gospel hymns," without admitting that for the regular worship of the church and the normal culture of the spiritual life we should accept anything but the best and highest.

As to the doctrinal and practical teachings of hymns, who is in so good condition to judge as the minister? It is his duty to recognise and to utilise this teaching power of hymns as being among the very best embodiments of biblical truth in experiential form and idealised expression. The exhortation to the Colossians should not be a dead letter to our churches: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." And the standard applies as justly to those "spiritual songs"—almost always directly biblical—which are sung by our choirs in the form of voluntaries of various kinds. The authorship of a hymn, its literary qualities, its emotional content and spiritual uses, especially as connected with the other parts of the service in which it is used, all these are points on which the minister should be ready to give light and inspiration. But hymns and anthems, solos and quartettes, as sung, depend almost wholly upon their poetical and musical qualities. The ordained leader of spiritual things should be trained to the discernment of these qualities. It is possible for him to familiarize himself not only with the grammar and the rhetoric, but also, and especially, with the philosophy of musical interpretation; so that, possessing an intelligent sympathy with the labours of his musicians, he may in alliance with them raise the church music to a high plane of intellectual and spiritual edification. The minister should feel himself responsible for the doctrinal bearing and devotional effect of all the music given in his services. But in order to discharge this part of his duty he must know something about poetry and music. It is not enough that he have a general desire to make the music contribute to the religious good of his people; he must see to it that it does this. An occasional song-service, with a well developed hymn-sermon, will be helpful in unifying pulpit, choir, and pew, and in vitalising the entire service.

Church music to-day presents a serious problem. There seem to be two extreme tendencies. On the one hand there is a reaching after something that shall "draw" those who are unconnected with the church, and "hold" those who are but slightly attached; and it is thought the music must be highly artistic, even though it be heartless and godless. On the other hand we find a strong tendency to popularise the singing of Scripture texts and religious sentiments, regardless of those properties of solidity and chaste beauty which the more cultivated and sensitive demand as the suitable expression of true religious feeling.

Now, there must be a way to harmonise the best elements in these opposing factions, to combine genuine spiritual instruction and edification with the satisfaction of the truest aesthetic feeling. I believe the solution is not far to seek. In our rich literature

of sacred music, ranging from the majestic oratorio chorus and the gorgeous *Te Deum* down to the plain hymn tune and the simple but sincere lyric song, we have abundance of adaptable material well fitted to give to the great mass of the people deeper satisfaction than they find in the luxurious display of the opera-house or the more refined pleasure of the chamber concert or even in the thrilling rendition of the grand orchestral symphony. Does this seem to great a claim? I believe it is justified by the fact of the greater number of listeners in the churches, and by the consideration that the most common as well as the deepest feelings of the heart are touched by the sober but inspiring strains of Christian song as they are not by the fictitious and the emotionally extravagant; just as pulpit oratory, made doubly practical by addressing the "business and bosoms" of men, draws, in the aggregate, larger throngs than all the philosophical lectures, platform entertainments, and political speeches.

But in order to thoroughly accomplish this natural function there must be both rational interpretation and enthusiastic rendition. There must be the theological point of view and the poetic inspiration. "What is it then? I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the understanding also; I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." Ideally we should have a ministry thoroughly educated in music; we can and must have, at the least, some musical intelligence on the part of our ministers.

Before we shall realise our ideal, one other thing must be done. As the minister should have something of the musician's view, so must the church musician be led to the minister's point of view. In either case something can be done by individual and self-directed effort; much more might be accomplished by systematic instruction and culture. A training school for church musicians, in which Christian men and women, already proficient in music technically, shall come to know and appreciate and utilise the literary and ecclesiastical bearings, and the devotional, evangelistic uses of music, is the "consummation devoutly to be wished."

Musical and poetic training of the ministry, together with religious training of musicianship, will throw the arch over the chasm which too largely and too shamefully separates art and piety.—*Music.*

SINGING FOR HEALTH.—Singing is highly recommended as a nerve-tonic, and justly. It is noticeable that birds are silent when they are sad, and unless they can be coaxed to sing they pine away. Human will and reason can rise superior to inclination, and force from the very talons of distress that with which to conquer it. When the world looks bleak, and affairs go wrong, sing some bright song at the full compass of your voice. Plaintive songs are not to be encouraged unless one has surplus vitality to get rid of; but no matter how much or how little voice you have, let it out in a ballad or carol now and then, or join the church choral society to improve your spirits, both by the vocal exercise and the social intercourse with healthy and active persons. If "happiness is health," we need to go where enjoyment is, and catch some of it when we feel like immuring ourselves in solitude.

On Deciding the Kind of Voice.

By F. H. TUBBS.

ONE of the perplexing problems among teachers is deciding the part to which a voice belongs. It is impossible to give infallible rules. Voices differ very greatly. We are accustomed to group them in six classes: soprano, mezzo-soprano, alto, tenor, baritone, and bass. The first three belong to ladies and the other to men. Sometimes we hear the remark made that a lady has a tenor voice or that a man sings soprano, but that is always mis-statement. The trouble in placing a voice in its proper class comes from having few distinguishing features of a class and because it is found that the given characteristics of one class may be trained into almost any voice. For instance, we say that a soprano has a high voice, of bright quality and much flexibility, while a contralto lends itself with fulness to low notes. But experience shows that a skilful trainer can make any voice obtain high notes, or he can give great fulness to any voice. It seems to be a matter which needs more definite instruction to teachers, drawn from extended experience of many teachers. But, at present, teachers differ greatly in ways of deciding. One teacher says all high voices are soprano and all low voices alto. He decides by range. Another teacher decides by quality of tone. Another by power. Another by location of register change. No wonder, then, that a pupil who goes from one teacher to another is called soprano by one, mezzo-soprano by a second, and an alto by a third. There is a class of teachers which will not decide what a voice is at first, preferring to wait a few weeks and see where the voice seems to locate itself under the method taught by that class. On the face of this it is a most dangerous proceeding, but it shows how vague conception of the subject is. Here is the practice of the writer, which has been tested by years of experience and which has not led to disappointments: Observe on what note the change of register occurs in the middle of the voice, and if that is high, the voice is soprano (or tenor) and if low, alto (or bass); if at the middle point, it is mezzo soprano (or baritone). Now, what is the change of register? Take the ladies' voices first. At or near B (third line of treble staff) a slight change of quality can be detected in any untrained voice. The singer may not know she makes any change at all. It is seldom so noticeable as to make a "break." If this change is on B or C and the voice is of bright quality, especially if the conversational voice is pitched high, the singer is unquestionably a soprano. If the change is as low as A or A flat, and the quality full, the voice is unquestionably alto. If the change is at A, B flat, or B, it is probably mezzo-soprano, and the quality must be the deciding factor whether the voice can best be trained for high or low singing. Such voices, when participating in quartette or chorus singing, should take that which the quality indicates.

In men's voices a similar change occurs in the middle of the chest voice (at or about B; on bass staff, first space above the staff). It is a little change and often requires keen perception to detect it. Because it is so

slight, untrained singers seldom displace it from the natural location. Modifying factors of quality, range, and pitch of speaking voice help in deciding whether a voice is tenor, baritone, or bass in exactly the same way they do when deciding about the ladies' voices. It should be the first care of the teacher to decide to which part an applicant for lessons belongs, and when decided, that person should be trained accordingly and not be allowed to change from one part to another.—*The Musician.*

Do's and Dont's in Music.

THE following is a series of hints to young singers and would-be singers from one of Boston's well-known musicians:—

1. Do start under the right instruction. It is far better to begin right in middle life than wrong in youth.
2. Do study everything carefully, for "what's worth doing at all is worth doing well."
3. Do cultivate refinement in all things. The tastes, inclinations, and tendencies of the singer, whether refined or coarse, are unavoidably made manifest in interpreting the music she sings.
4. Do keep up with the events of the world in a general way, but while studying music, live in an atmosphere of music. Concentration is the secret of many a singer's success.
5. Do sing everything as the author wrote it, for one should be as truthful in music as in history.
6. Do plan your mode of living and hours for eating, sleeping, and exercising according to the manner in which they affect your singing.
7. Do throw your whole soul into your singing. Live in the song while you sing it. The sympathy and interest of an audience is most frequently gained by the sincere, soulful, and truthful rendering of a selection.
8. Do cultivate animation, warmth of spirit and colouring in rendering your songs.
9. Do train yourself to be cool-headed and collected when singing.
10. Do sing without notes when possible. You can produce better dramatic effects and hold your audience better by so doing.

1. Don't try to study music, art, and science all at the same time. Select one, and do that well.
2. Don't think of making music your profession unless you have a more than ordinary talent for it. The musical profession is already crowded with performers, except at the very top, where there is always plenty of room.
3. Don't think of making music your profession unless you have plenty of money to give yourself the best possible musical education.
4. Don't think that only training in execution and technique of the voice is sufficient. The professional singer should be a perfect reader and well schooled in counterpoint and in harmony.
5. Don't think the life of a successful singer is easy. The more successful the singer the more she becomes a slave to her profession.

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6. Don't make a practice of humming. It tires the voice exceedingly.

7. Don't practise long at a time, especially if you are just beginning. It is much better to practise little and often.

8. Don't eat just before singing. A hearty meal several hours before, and a light, stimulating refreshment just before you sing is much better.

9. Don't drink wine for a stimulant. It not only is drying to the throat, but is too strong a stimulant. A person needs to be especially self-composed when singing.

10. Don't indulge in mannerisms and catchy originalities in rendering your selections. A natural manner and sincere singing is much more pleasing and desirable.—*Werner's Magazine.*

The Singer's Mission.

BY BERTRAND H. RIGGS.

WHAT is a singer's mission? For what special purpose were you given a vocal mechanism to use in the divine art, song? Questions if asked of a dozen people would receive as many different answers.

Vocal art is commonly classified into three branches, namely: Oratorio, Opera, and Church and Concert. Singers study to fill these respective branches according to their inclination or vocal ability. It is not the intention of this paper to discuss the merits of either of these fields of vocal work, except to show wherein the singer may best perform his or her mission, leaving out the field of teaching, for the art of teaching requires all these, with a distinct talent for imparting knowledge which very few possess.

The mission of song should be to elevate poor, struggling humanity, and that it is fitted for such a purpose is demonstrated by its being used as a panacea for disease, in winning human beings to a higher plane, placing them in a justified state before God, and in the simplest use (but how beautiful a picture) of the infant sung to rest on its mother's breast.

Why quote the practical side instead of the pleasing? Because in the age now dawning the simply pleasing will be of little use. What the world is longing for is something to help it put down evil, lifting it out of suffering and wrong into the kingdom of human perfection promised to mankind through Abraham centuries ago.

But the singer replies, "My business is not singing babies to sleep, visiting hospitals to heal the sick and raise the dead, for I'm studying the great works of art, oratorio, and opera." True, but humanity is the same wherever you go, and greater becomes your responsibility in proportion to the number with which you come in contact.

Song is elevating, but vocal art is allied to poetical text, which limits it either for good or evil, according to the meaning of the text. The musician undoubtedly will not sing any but the more uplifting sentiment. True, but are we as singers (by the term singers I mean all, from the least unto the greatest) putting into

song all that *spiritual divine* something which belongs to the gift of song? It matters not whether one is singing a love ballad or some grand aria, if the one thing, "*Soul*," is lacking. This leads us to analyse tone. According to the latest scientific investigations, it is a substance existing in sounding bodies themselves and atmosphere, much like heat, light, and electricity. This being true, which we have no reason to doubt, we, as singers, have controlled but very little. Only as we have some material body for it to vibrate through can we as material bodies hear it; therefore it depends upon the receptive body whether we receive much or little, good or bad.

If tone, then, is all around us only waiting for us to bring it into existence, how about the effect upon the *listener*? Herein lies our mission as singers. If our bodies produce the audible effect of this *divine law-tone*—it can also produce a sympathetic effect of the emotions in those listening in proportion as we are given up to divine law. The listener being a mind dwelling in a like body, subject to emotional upliftings as ourselves, will, if we ourselves are unlimitedly pouring out this divine law, tone, feel within himself emotional uplifting which, whether he knows it or not, is the Spirit of Christ seeking to uplift the mind to the plane of Christ consciousness. Only in proportion as divine law is allowed to sing through us will the uplifting of humanity be gained. Such being the case, ought we not to have more singers of note, considering the number of so-called Christian singers? Why is voice culture necessary? Two reasons why. Muscles so long remaining in an inactive state will not respond to the work brought to bear upon them until they are restored to good hearty action and strength, which can best be done under the direction of a competent teacher. Second: The best music teacher brings into his pupil's life not a voice, for voices are not made, but a begetting to the Christ-like nature, and leads the pupil to be a lover of the word and light to the world.

This theory seems beautiful on paper, and is, I assure you, just as practical as it is beautiful, for once in a while we do hear real vocal expression, and then such tone, electrifying, whether hard or soft, vocalizing with syllable "ah," or using any language.

Whether the opera, oratorio, or church and concert field has the greatest possibilities each singer must be his own judge. Much of the music in the opera is excellent, but the librettos are very far from being the best. The oratorio, while having a grand text, is deficient in music to express the meaning found in the text. The church and concert fields are yet to be developed, for creeds and selfish denominational principles bind the church and lack of good concert songs limit the concert singer.

It depends upon the singer how these fields develop, or if he, through "*divine law*," can uplift humanity in what we now have, greater writers will be inspired, and in proportion as the demand will be the supply. The singer's mission, then, is an uplifting one, be they cultured or uncultured, and only through that one divine law—expression—can it be done.—*The Musician.*

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF NORTH LONDON CHOIRS.

THE tenth annual Service of Praise was held on Tuesday, 2nd March, at Highbury Presbyterian Church, when, in spite of the inclemency of the weather, there was a very good muster of singers comprising members of the following Presbyterian choirs:—Brondesbury, Camden Road, Canonbury, Clapton, College Park, Crouch Hill, Hampstead, Haverstock Hill, Highbury, Highgate, Islington, Marylebone, Regent Square, St. John's Wood, Stoke Newington, Stratford, Westbourne Grove, and Willesden.

The opening voluntaries, "Andante in E minor" (Smart) and "Offertory in F minor" (Salomé) were tastefully rendered by Mr. Fred S. Thacker (Stratford), after which choir and congregation joined heartily in the well-known hymn "Hallelujah! hearts to heaven and voices raise" to Sullivan's tune "Lux Eoi," which, being followed by prayer, the choir sang, unaccompanied, Attwood's anthem, "Teach me, O Lord," in a marked devotional manner. The first Scripture lesson preceded the hymn, "There is a land of pure delight," to Dykes' tune "Canaan"; after which the choir slowly chanted Psalm xlii. to a chant by Mr. Arnold Kennedy, which was expressly composed for the new selection of "Psalms for Chanting," recently issued for use in Presbyterian churches.

The New Testament lesson was followed by a spirited rendering of Sullivan's fine anthem, "Sing, O heavens," the tenor solo in which was sung by Mr. Hulbert L. Fulkerson, precentor at Regent Square. A brief prayer followed, and the choir then sang the hymn, "Thee will I love," to the ancient plain song, "Veni Emmanuel." This being taken in unison (two verses by female and male voices respectively) at a very steady pace, proved a most effective illustration of the old style of Church music.

The Rev. P. Carmichael, B.D., minister of the church, gave an eminently practical address to the choirs and congregation, and after Cowper's "Sometimes a light surprises" had been sung by all to Hullah's tune "Bentley," the offertory was taken. The service, which was under the able direction of Mr. F. G. Edwards, A.R.A.M. (St. John's Wood), closed, after a few words from Mr. Robert Wales, the president, with the well-known "All hail the power" to "Miles Lane." Mr. H. E. Ryall (Highgate) played the out voluntary, "Festal March" (Calkin), the service having been accompanied throughout by Mr. Fredk. Meen, the newly appointed organist of the church.

CHORAL FESTIVAL AT MANCHESTER.

A SERVICE, which may be taken as a "sign of the times," has recently been held at the Cheetham Hill Congregational Church. By the pastors, deacons, and other responsible officials of the Broughton, Broughton Park, and Cheetham Hill Congregational churches the 24th of February was looked forward to with hope and pleasing anticipation. These churches on the outskirts of Manchester are only a short walk distant from one another, and it had been decided to hold a United Choral Service (rendered by the choirs of the three churches) which, if successful, was to be the forerunner of a series to be held at the churches in succession, and become a permanent institution. The red-letter day arrived, and as we entered the pretty building at 7.45 p.m., there were abundant signs of something out of the ordinary way. Printed programmes of words were distributed gratis, and an active band of workers extended the heartiest welcome to all comers. The combined choirs (numbering about 100) were assembling, and piles of books, music, pro-

grammes, etc., were to be seen laid out in order for the numerous vocalists. Mr. W. H. Purdy, the chapel organist, took up his position in good time for a prompt commencement. The singers throughout were admirably conducted (hymns included) by Mr. C. Ashley, the Broughton Park organist. The Rev. J. Henderson, the Cheetham Hill pastor, conducted the service, and in his opening remarks explained that it was an effort to draw the three churches more together by the joint Services of Praise. The first item was the well-known Sanctus by Camidge, "Holy, Holy, Holy." Then the Lord's Prayer was intoned, harmony being added by the organ. This was followed by the hymn "All people that on earth" to the *Old Hundredth*. The first purely choral item now came—"The Heavens Proclaim Him" (Beethoven). It will be noticed that this and the two following anthems were selected from the Congregational Hymnal. A lesson was then read by the Rev. J. Henderson. Next came the anthem of Sullivan's "O, Love the Lord." In this there were signs of insufficient rehearsal among the basses where the three leads "Be strong" come in. At the first and third they were not quite unanimous on the upper note. Prayer was offered at the close of the anthem by the Rev. S. Pearson, M.A., of Broughton Park. A Hymn, "Stand up and bless the Lord," then preceded a very pithy little address by the Rev. J. M'Dougall, of Broughton, who originated the idea of the service. He let it be clearly understood that disaster would follow any attempt by the minister to make the service merely an opportunity for a "pulpit oration," whilst a similar result would follow if the organist and choir quite dominated the service to serve their pleasure. His address was admirably adapted to the occasion. He hoped the choirs would sanctify themselves to their work and improve the service "upward." The chorus "How lovely are the messengers" (Mendelssohn's *Sz. Paul*) was then well given, it being evident there was a good alto force. Sad to relate, the first note was left to only two or three voices, one of these being of remarkable power and quality, however. An offertory was then taken to cover printing expenses, etc., being followed by the recit. "In splendour bright," and chorus "The Heavens are telling," in which the basses came out very finely. The concluding item was the hymn "Sun of my soul, Thou Saviour dear." The tunes were taken from the Bristol and the Congregational Hymnal. There was no attempt to make the service too classical, the rendering of the items on the whole reflecting the highest credit on the choirs, whilst the large congregation thoroughly enjoyed and entered into the service.

Echoes from the Churches.

(Paragraphs for this column should reach us by the 20th of the month.)

METROPOLITAN.

GROSVENOR SQUARE.—Mr. Burritt Lane, Mus.Bac., gave an interesting organ recital in the King's Weigh House Chapel. His programme included selections from the works of Wely, Sterndale Bennett, Schubert, Handel, and Spinney. Mr. James Alvery sang several solos with acceptance.

PECKHAM.—Mr. E. J. Francis has been appointed Organist and Choirmaster of Clifton Congregational Church, after competition, Mr. Minshall being judge. —Mr. H. C. Williams has been appointed organist of Lindon Grove Congregational Church.

STRATFORD connected cludes the pianoforte church, an amount recert was March 1st being large priced sel spirited r (solo by M are the r Miss Hel Kate Osw Taylor; " and "Ho secular it pleasant the Vikin being ex inello," M encored), while "K by Mr. J. however, Quaker S and lifel applause, "Aunt T gramme comprising (violin), selection "Comme were a Morphev Beriot), of the ch choirmas

BESSES 20th, the annual p numberi assembl very attr tified. A plants w parts of fully arr and sub their frie direction The pas thanks t also to t during t was sec course c musical the prop Ragdale Mr. Lea after w dulged sandwich o'clock close by

BOVE concert

STRATFORD, E.—The "Church Praise Association" connected with the Presbyterian Church, which includes the choir, recently purchased an upright grand pianoforte, for use by the various societies of the church, and with a view to liquidating the balance of amount required to complete payment for same, a concert was organised, which took place on Thursday, March 11th, and proved most successful, the audience being large and very appreciative. The first part comprised selections of sacred music, and opened with a spirited rendering of Sullivan's "Sing, O heavens" (solo by Mrs. Thacker), concluding with "How lovely are the messengers." Other items were "Calvary," Miss Helen Weir; "But the Lord is mindful," Miss Kate Oswald; "Entreat me not to leave thee," Miss M. Taylor; "The Heavenly Song," Miss Jeanie Lawson; and "Honour and Arms," Mr. H. W. Braine. The secular items included part-songs, "He that hath a pleasant face" (Hatton), "Moonlight" and "Song of the Vikings" (Eaton Fanning) by the choir, the latter being excellently rendered. Miss Weir sang "Punchinello," Miss Oswald "The Promise of Life," Miss Taylor "Sunshine and Rain" (which was vociferously encored), and Miss Lawson "Queen of the Earth," while "Kathleen Mavourneen" was tastefully rendered by Mr. J. T. Foreland. The success of the evening was, however, a recitation by Mrs. Thacker, "The Little Quaker Sinner," which was rendered in such a quaint and lifelike manner as to merit and receive great applause, in response to which Mrs. Thacker recited "Aunt Tabitha." The instrumental portion of the programme was supplied by the "Plumstead Quartet," comprising Miss Turnbull (pianoforte), Messrs. Harris (violin), Morpew (flute), and Thomas (cello), whose selections, "Minuet, trio and finale" (Haydn), and "Commedietta" (Gurlitt) were excellently rendered, as were a flute solo, "Romance" (Jadassohn), by Mr. Morpew, and a violin solo, "Scene de Ballet" (De Beriot), by Mr. Harris. Mr. Fred. S. Thacker, organist of the church, accompanied, Mr. Henry W. Braine, the choirmaster, conducting.

PROVINCIAL.

BESSES, NR. MANCHESTER.—On Saturday, February 20th, the choir of the Congregational Church held their annual party. At five o'clock the choir and friends, numbering in the aggregate about ninety persons, assembled in the large school. The room presented a very attractive appearance, having been recently beautified. A choice and varied selection of greenhouse plants were also effectively disposed of in appropriate parts of the room. The tables, too, were most tastefully arranged. The company partook of an excellent and substantial tea. The choir afterwards entertained their friends by singing a selection of music, under the direction of Mr. Leaver, the organist and choirmaster. The pastor, the Rev. A. Bond, proposed a vote of thanks to the host and hostess, Mr. and Mrs. Leaver, also to the choir for their kindness and efficient services during the evening and the past year. The proposal was seconded by Mr. David Birchenall, who, in the course of his remarks, related some of his amusing musical experiences. Mr. John Mellodew supported the proposal, which was put to the meeting by Mr. Ragdale, and carried by hearty acclamation, to which Mr. Leaver briefly responded. Fruit was then served, after which the youthful portion of the company indulged in various amusements. Afterwards, coffee, sandwiches, cake, etc., were partaken of, and at ten o'clock the pleasant proceedings were brought to a close by singing the Doxology.

BOVEY TRACEY.—On Tuesday, March 16th, a sacred concert (on behalf of the fund for the renovation of the

manse) was given in the Congregational Chapel by Dr. and Mrs. Mansfield, of Torquay, assisted by the choir and Mr. H. Heath, a pupil of Dr. Mansfield. The choir contributed a couple of anthems, Mr. Heath was very successful in Gounod's "Nazareth" and "Watchman, what of the night," while Mrs. Mansfield contributed contralto solos from various standard and modern oratorios, Leslie's "O Babe, my Son, my Saviour" being re-demanded. The same lady also rendered two violin solos, an Andante by Molique, and a Romance by Dr. Mansfield, who accompanied. The building was crowded to its utmost capacity. During the interval the Rev. M. Gautrey (Wesleyan) delivered an address. The pastor (Rev. M. L. Gooby) and the Rev. J. Payne (Baptist) also took part in the proceedings.

IPSWICH.—A very interesting organ recital was given in Turret Green Baptist Church, on the 17th ult., by Mr. William J. Wightman, A.R.C.O. The pieces selected included the following:—"Pastorale Sonata" (Rheinberger), "Allegretto in B minor" and Marche Nuptiale (Guilmant), "Busslied," from Songs of Gellert (Beethoven), Prelude and Fugue in E minor (Bach), Barcarole, from the Fourth Concerto (Sterndale Bennett), Offertoire in D flat (Salomé), "Nazareth" (Gounod), "Cantilène" and "Grand Chœur" (Wheeldon). Vocal items were contributed by Mr. Allen C. Orriss, who was in excellent voice, and gave an expressive rendering of "Eternal Rest" (Piccolomini), and Miss S. Wightman gave great satisfaction in Mascheroni's "Angels' Song." The duet, "Love Divine," from Stainer's *Daughter of Jairus*, by Miss Wightman and Mr. Orriss, was greatly appreciated by the audience. Mr. T. Conder Nash lent valuable aid at the piano; the two organ and piano duets in which he joined Mr. Wightman were not the least enjoyable of the many compositions which constituted the varied programme.

NEWBURY, BERKS.—The Primitive Methodist Church, Bartholomew Street, has recently undergone extensive improvements, including new galleries and a two-manual organ built by Mr. Alfred Monk, of London. The instrument is powerful and tone very sweet and full, allowing it to take an equal position with the other organs of the town. It was used for the first time at the re-opening of the church, which took place on March 10th.

PORTSMOUTH.—The *Giant's Castle*, an allegorical cantata, by W. G. Hancock, B.A., was recently rendered at Lake Road Chapel, Portsmouth, by a large Choir under the conductorship of Mr. W. E. Green. Both the libretto and music of the work are beyond the ordinary type, and the audience compelled the composer, who was present, to respond to an enthusiastic call.

COLONIAL.

WELLINGTON (NEW ZEALAND).—The organ in St. Luke's Church has just undergone a complete overhaul, and several new stops have been added to it. The following is the programme played by Mr. W. A. Reid, organist of the church, at the re-opening on Wednesday evening, January 20th:—Marcia in F (A. J. Barth), Fantasia in F (Dr. Wm. Spark), Civic March (F. N. Birtchnell), Offertoire in F (J. Hartwell), Grand Fantasia in E minor; "The Storm" (J. Lemmens), "Hallelujah Chorus" *Messiah* (Handel), "Pastoral Symphony" *Messiah* (Handel), "Triumphal Fanfare" (Handel); "Dance of the Spectres"; "Admeto" (Handel), "March aux Flambeaux" (S. Clarke). The choir, under the conductorship of Mr. J. Reynolds, rendered very acceptably the following pieces: "The Heavens are Telling" (Haydn), and "Fear not, O Land" (Sir J. Goss).

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